

# UFO POTPOURRI

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## *Air Controller Confirms UFO Had Been Trailing Jumbo Jet*

By JEFF BERLINER

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (UPI) — An air controller said radar showed a mysterious object following a Japan Air Lines cargo flight at the time the crew reported a UFO with flashing lights trailing the jumbo jet near the Arctic Circle.

All three crewmen on JAL Flight 1628 told Federal Aviation Administration investigators they saw white and yellow lights close to their Boeing 747 on Nov. 17 after they crossed the Arctic Circle 30 miles southeast of Fort Yukon in an over-the-pole flight from Reykjavik, Iceland, to Tokyo via Anchorage.

The FAA released details of the incident Monday when queried by United Press International.

Air Force officials confirmed their radar picked up something near the JAL plane, but Capt. Robert Morris of the Alaska Air Command suggested the UFO was "random clutter or weather interference." Another Air Force spokesman, Sgt. Jack Hokanson, said, "We got out of the UFO business some time ago."

FAA security manager Jim Derry interviewed the three crewmen — Capt. Kenju Terauchi, 1st Officer Takanori Tamefuji and Flight Engineer Yoshio Tsukuda — and concluded they were not hallucinating and not on drugs or alcohol and were rational. The weather was clear, the FAA said.

FAA spokesman Paul Steucke said there was no other air traffic along the same little-traveled route that night. Steucke also noted the FAA's electronically recorded radar data did not support the UFO sighting.

But the existence of an unidentified object was confirmed by a report from the flight controller in charge of JAL 1628. Steucke said the controller, who was not named, had two years experience.

During the flight, the controller asked Terauchi to identify the craft and then wrote, "He could not identify but reported white and yellow strobes." The lighting was not a normal aircraft marking pattern, the

crew said.

In his one-page report, the controller said repeatedly he saw another object on radar staying near the JAL jet despite FAA-approved turns and altitude changes. The object was as close as 5 miles, the controller wrote.

According to the FAA account, the pilot contacted Anchorage controllers about planes in the area at 6:19 p.m., reporting the UFO 1 mile away from his plane. At 6:25, the crew reported it 8 miles away.

At 6:26, the FAA contacted the Military Operations Control Center at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage to find out if the UFO appeared on its radar. Military radar-watchers reported an object 8 miles from the JAL jet, but one minute later they told the FAA the object no longer appeared on radar.

At 6:31, the JAL crew told the FAA the unidentified object was "quite big" and the FAA directed the crew to drop from 35,000 feet to 31,000 feet.

"When asked if the traffic (the UFO) was descending also, the pilot stated it was descending in 'in formation.'"

At 6:35, Fairbanks controllers were asked for assistance, but reported nothing unusual on radar.

Anchorage controllers directed the JAL plane to make a 360-degree turn, and the crew reported they no longer saw the lights, but Air Force officials told the FAA they saw a "flight of two" and "advised it looked as though the (unidentified) traffic had dropped back and to the right" of JAL 1628.

At 6:45, the FAA asked a northbound United Airlines flight to make a 10-degree turn to better see the JAL plane to confirm the existence of the UFO — which the crew was then reporting 8 miles away and nearly behind them. That was their last sighting. The United crew reported seeing nothing out of the ordinary. Nor did a military C-130 the FAA asked to help.

Steucke said the FAA has drawn no conclusion about the incident.

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